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## **NEIGHBORHOOD MATCHING GRANTS PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2007**

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Neighborhood Matching Grants program provides neighborhood organizations the opportunity to implement public projects that will be awarded a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$10,000 in City funds to be matched equally by a private source of funds, donated funds, labor and/or in-kind contributions.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To participate in the program, the grant requestor must be one of the following:

- a non-profit organization
- neighborhood association or home owners association registered with the City
- citizen on patrol group or crime watch group registered with the Arlington Police Department
- a youth organization

All participants must also have an IRS 501(c)3 non-profit status, or partner with an organization that does and will serve as the fiscal agent for the project.

### **PROJECT CRITERIA**

Projects eligible for funds must meet a public purpose and must benefit a neighborhood. An example of eligible projects include but are not limited to: crime reduction, beautification, action plans, improvements to neighborhood parks, traffic calming sign toppers, support money for seeking 501(c)3 status or seed fund for a community celebration to start a neighborhood association, public amenities, tree planting, and safety equipment.

Grant requests can be made for a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$10,000. An additional \$5,000 (for a total not to exceed \$15,000) can be requested for projects where implementation includes at least 66% (2 to 1) of the volunteer labor being provided by youth, and youth are encouraged to take other leadership roles in the programs.

Generally, projects that only benefit an individual or restricted group of people, such as those inside a gated community are ineligible for grant funds. Other reasons for application disqualification include inability to demonstrate match for grant funds, requests for educational/social services, salaries or operating expenses, requests to supplant current funding being received, projects that conflict with City improvements, are outside of City limits, or do not comply with local, state, or federal law.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Associations are required to complete a Letter of Intent form and submit it to the City Manager's Office. The City encourages applicants to propose multiple projects to increase the likelihood of receiving funding. When submitted multiple projects, associations should prioritize them for the selection committee; only one project will be funded per grant cycle per association. The City will confirm that the proposed project serves public purpose or need, benefits a neighborhood, has a 501(c)3 to serve as fiscal agent (if necessary) and sufficiently fulfills match requirements. Full grant applications will be accepted by invitation only.

Once an agency has been invited to submit a full grant application, it is assigned a City staff liaison to assist with the application process. Grant applications will be evaluated by a selection committee on how well they demonstrate the following:

- project need
- benefit to neighborhood
- functional benefit
- a budget clearly reflecting accurate project costs
- cost effectiveness
- good cost-benefit ratio
- detailed and achievable timeline
- well articulated project
- well planned project
- ability to meet applicable codes
- readiness for project execution
- provision of long-term maintenance
- building neighborhood cooperation
- involving a significant number of neighbors
- benefits a significant number of neighbors
- project meets city priorities
- project compliments city's long term plans
- project involves collaboration with other groups

For the Neighborhood Youth Matching Grant, proposals also have to clearly demonstrate that 66% of the volunteer labor is provided by youth. Evaluation of these submissions will also consider how the association encouraged youth to have additional roles in the process such as:

- identifying the neighborhood issue
- assessing the community need
- developing the project idea
- completing the letter of intent
- writing the grant proposal
- participating in more than the minimum (66%) of required volunteer time

Should an association not invited to submit a full grant application want to appeal that decision, it may do so by submitting a letter of appeal to the selection committee chair.

This request for reconsideration must provide additional information supporting justification as to how the project does in fact meet the criteria for which they were denied an invitation.

### **GRANT APPROVAL**

Full grant proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a selection committee of City staff, chaired by a Deputy City Manager. Their recommendation for award will be presented to the Community and Neighborhood Development Committee and then to the City Council for final approval. Associations will receive a letter of confirmation once their application has been approved via resolution by the City Council. The letter will be followed by a contractual agreement that will need to be signed by the association and their fiscal agent. A check in the amount of the grant will be awarded to the fiscal agent; grantees will obtain funding and coordinate documentation of expenditure through their fiscal agent.

### **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

Work on the project just begin no sooner than full execution of a contractual agreement but within 60 days of that signature. All work should be complete within 180 of contract execution. Projects requiring city permits will require associations to have those permits prior to beginning the project.

Grantees will be required to submit monthly reports documenting expenditures by line item, fulfillment of match obligations, and project status information to their assigned City liaison. The monthly reports shall be submitted by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month on standard forms provided by the City and supporting documentation should provide sufficient evidence of activities including:

- Volunteer time sheets showing the days and number of hours worked
- Hold Harmless Agreements signed by each volunteer
- Receipts for all cash purchases with the vendor's name, address, phone number, item(s) purchased, date and method of purchase, proof of payment
- Documented volunteer professional services including a scope of work (deliverables, estimated time necessary to complete the project and current cost of providing the services)- any discounts given should be submitted on company letterhead
- Documentation that match funds were exhausted prior to spending grant funds provided by the City (via the fiscal agent)

Associations must ensure that any damages to adjacent personal property, features of right of ways, or any other locations, as a result of this project are repaired. Documentation of such repairs must to be submitted to the City along with standard monthly reporting.

Within 30 days of project completion, the project will need to be closed out with the City. Failure to do this will result in future ineligibility to apply for Neighborhood Matching Grants by the association and fiscal agent. Close out documentation includes post-completion photographs of the project site (if applicable), a final list of volunteers

working on the project, account of the expenditure of the City's cash grant funds, and final documentation of match fulfillment.